

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRETOR 04179 232332Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

ICAE-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 /073 W

-----034101 232339Z /66

O 232100Z JUL 78 ZFF4

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1831

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4179

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, SF, WA

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: SAG REJECTS WALVIS BAY RESOLUTION -

PRETORIA FIVE MEETING WITH BOTHA JULY 23

THE FOLLOWING IS THE REPORT OF THE PRETORIA

FIVE ON THEIR MEETING THIS EVENING, JULY 23,

WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA.

1. FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA CALLED THE PRETORIA FIVE TO HIS HOME AT 7 PM ON SUNDAY 23 JULY TO DELIVERY PRIME MINISTER VORSTER'S REPLY TO THE LETTERS OF 17 JULY FROM THE FIVE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT (TEXT SEPTTEL). BRAND FOURIE GAVE US A COPY OF THE REPLY TO READ BEFORE BOTHA CAME IN FOR ABOUT 30 MINUTES DISCUSSION.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRETOR 04179 232332Z

2. BOTHA STARTED BY SAYING THAT HE FELT DOUBLE-CROSSED BY THE FIVE GOVERNMENTS. IF THE FIVE PROCEEDED WITH SUPPORT FOR THE RESOLUTION ON WALVIS BAY GIVEN TO MR EKSTEEN IN NEW YORK, THEN IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO COOPERATE WITH THE FIVE AND THE UN. ASKED IF THIS MEANT THEY WOULD NOT IMPLEMENT THE PROPOSAL, FOURIE QUOTED THE SENTENCE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER WHICH

SAID THAT SUPPORT FOR THE RESOLUTION WOULD "SO DESTROY CONFIDENCE THAT IT WOULD BECOME IMPOSSIBLE TO COOPERATE WITH THE FIVE IN IMPLEMENTING THEIR PROPOSAL".

3. IN HIS TYPICAL BOMBASTIC FASHION, BOTHA SAID THIS HAD BEEN THE MOST SHOCKING EXPERIENCE OF HIS LIFE; HE DID NOT THINK IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT GOVERNMENTS ACTED IN SUCH A WAY.
"WE CAME TO A FIRM AGREEMENT ON THIS ISSUE AND YOUR GOVERNMENTS BROKE THAT AGREEMENT. YOU HAVE TAKEN SIDES DECISIVELY. I WAS PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE VOLUNTARILY WITH PERHAPS THE SAME RESULT BUT YOU PROPOSED A RESOLUTION WHICH PREJUDGES THE RESULT AND WOULD KEEP THE SECURITY COUNCIL SIEZED OF THE ISSUE UNTIL RE-INTEGRATION OF WALVIS BAY. IF WE HAVE TO PAY THE PRICE THEN WE ARE PREPARED TO DO SO."

4. IN FURTHER DISCUSSION, BOTHA EMPHASISED SEVERAL TIMES THE PREJUDICIAL NATURE OF THE FIVE'S POSITION. BY SUPPORTING THE RESOLUTION THEY PRE-DETERMINED THE RESULT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE REFERRED SEVERAL TIMES TO THE FACT THAT HE AND FOURIE BOTH HAD CONSIDERABLE UN EXPERIENCE AND THEY KNEW THAT A RESOLUTION KEEPING THE SECURITY COUNCIL SEIZED OF THE ISSUE MEANT THAT EVENTUAL PRESSURE WOULD BE BROUGHT TO BEAR TO ENFORCE THAT RESOLUTION UPON SOUTH AFRICA. IF THE NEGOTIATIONS HAD BROKEN DOWN ON THE ISSUE OF ONE MAN ONE VOTE, HE WOULD HAVE FELT SOME GUILT. BUT THE FACT THAT WE WERE RENEGING ON THE CLEAR-CUT UNDERSTANDING OF SOUTH AFRICA'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER WALVIS BAY MADE HIM VERY SAD.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRETOR 04179 232332Z

UNLIKE THE FIVE, SOUTH AFRICA WAS NOT A STRONG POWER IN THE WORLD BUT THEY WERE NOT PREPARED TO GIVE IN TO PRESSURES OF THIS KIND.

5. IT IS APPARENT FROM BOTH THE LETTER AND BOTHA'S REMARKS THAT THE SAG IS PREPARING A CASE TO CLAIM BAD FAITH ON THE PART OF THE FIVE. AMONG OTHER THINGS, THEY CLAIM THAT OUR TENTATIVE FORMULATION OF 16 FEBRUARY 1978 REPRESENTED A FIRM COMMITMENT REGARDING THE FIVE'S POSITION ON WALVIS BAY. IN ARGUING THE POINT, BOTHA AND FOURIE PUT STRONG EMPHASIS ON OUR DEPARTURE FROM THIS FORMULATION AS EVIDENCE THAT THE FIVE HAD BROKEN AN AGREEMENT WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT. WE OF COURSE ANSWERED THAT IT WAS NEITHER AN UNDERSTANDING NOR AN AGREEMENT BUT ONLY A STATEMENT THAT WE MIGHT HAVE TO MAKE ON THIS POINT IF CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRED.

6. BOTHA SAID SEVERAL TIMES THAT THE LETTERS FROM THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT WERE SOMETHING THAT THE SAG COULD LIVE WITH, WHEREAS THE RESOLUTION WAS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. HE SAID THAT HE AND FOURIE HAD PERSUADED THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE BASIS OF THE LETTERS TO ACCEPT THE FIVE'S PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION AND MR. VORSTER HAD ACCEPTED THIS UNTIL THEY RECEIVED THE TEXT OF

THE RESOLUTION. THE PRIME MINISTER HAD AUTHORISED HIM TO GO TO THE UNITED NATIONS THIS EVENING, 23 JULY, BUT THE WHOLE BASIS OF THIS DECISION HAD BEEN DESTROYED BY THE TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION AND OUR SUPPORT OF IT. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE PRIME MINISTER HAD DECIDED THAT THERE WAS NO MORE TO TALK ABOUT.

7. WE ASKED BOTHA WHAT ACTION THE SAG NOW INTENDED TO TAKE. HE SAID THAT HE WAS NOT PROPOSING TO MAKE AN IMMEDIATE ANNOUNCEMENT, BUT THE SAG PLANNED TO CIRCULATE THE TEXT OF THE LETTER ON TUESDAY 25 JULY AS AN OFFICIAL UN DOCUMENT.

8. AS THE MEETING WAS BREAKING UP, WE ASKED BOTHA ON A STRICTLY HYPOTHETICAL BASIS WHETHER IT WOULD MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO THE SAG'S ATTITUDE IF THE FIVE ABSTAINED ON THE RESOLUTION. CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PRETOR 04179 232332Z

BOTHA ANSWERED WITHOUT HESITATION THAT IT WOULD DRAMATICALLY TRANSFORM THE SITUATION.

9. PRETORIA FIVE COMMENT. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT BOTHA AND FOURIE WERE VERY STRICTLY BOUND BY THE INSTRUCTIONS AND STRONG FEELINGS OF THEIR PRIME MINISTER. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, THERE HAD BEEN AN EMERGENCY CABINET MEETING ON THE SUBJECT LAST NIGHT. WHAT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE IS WHETHER THERE IS SOME DEGREE OF BRINKMANSHIP IN THEIR POSITION: THAT IS, WHETHER THEY ARE HOPING THAT THEIR VERY STRONG RESPONSE WILL CAUSE THE FIVE TO ABSTAIN ON THE RESOLUTION OR TRY TO AMEND IT IN THEIR FAVOUR. IF THEIR POSITION IS ONE OF BRINKMANSHIP, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THEY MAY STILL MAKE A FINAL DETERMINATION OF THEIR POSITION ONLY AFTER ACTION IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL. IT IS POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THAT THEY HAVE DETERMINED IN ADVANCE THAT THEY WILL NOT TOLERATE THIS RESOLUTION ON WALVIS BAY, REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES. THE EMPHASIS THAT BOTHA AND FOURIE PLACED ON THE FACT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD HAVE BROKEN OFF NEGOTIATIONS HAD HE KNOWN THAT SUCH A RESOLUTION WOULD BE OFFERED SUGGESTS THAT THE SAG IS NOT DELIBERATELY PLAYING BRINKMANSHIP. THERE IS, HOWEVER, A REAL DANGER, IF THEY PURSUE THEIR INTENTION TO PUBLISH MR. VORSTER'S LETTER ON 25 JULY, THEY WOULD BE COMMITTED TO AN IRREVERSIBLE POSITION WHICH MIGHT PREJUDICE THE DISCUSSION IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE TO MAKE HIS INITIAL VISIT TO SWA. IT IS STILL CLEARLY IN THEIR MINDS THAT, IF IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REACH AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION, THEY WILL PROCEED WITH AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AS FAR AS POSSIBLE ALONG THE LINES OF OUR PROPOSAL. EDMONDSON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RESOLUTIONS, MEETING REPORTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, WALVIS BAY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PRETOR04179
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780302-1006
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780729/aaaaaynf.tel
Line Count: 165
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c545f96d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1912984
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NAMIBIA: SAG REJECTS WALVIS BAY RESOLUTION - PRETORIA FIVE MEETING WITH BOTHA JULY 23 THE FOLLOWING IS THE REPORT OF THE PRETORIA
TAGS: PORG, SF, WA, (BOTHA, PIK)
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c545f96d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014